

09/589,866 *Replacement Page, Amended March 1, 2002*

CLAIM

I claim:

A1
1. A portable and unobtrusive educational apparatus which provides self-paced instruction and which is carried by a person without requiring special accommodation or space, and which may be easily and flexibly manufactured and packaged compactly, comprising the combination of:

5 a key which is operative to open a lock and permit access which is otherwise prevented by said lock;

a key ring which operatively prevents inadvertent attachment or removal of said key while operatively permitting intentional insertion or removal;

10 a plurality of educational key tags, each one of said plurality fabricated from a durable and weather resistant planar material having a means for attaching said tag to said key ring which is operatively prevented from inadvertent attachment or removal while operatively permitted intentional attachment or removal from said key ring, said tag additionally presenting an educational challenge displayed on a first surface and presenting an answer appropriate to said challenge, said answer normally concealed when said educational challenge is visible;

wherein at least one of said plurality of educational key tags is attached to said key ring.

A2
4. The portable and unobtrusive educational apparatus of claim 1 wherein said plurality of educational key tags are further comprised by a reinforced polymeric composition that is both durable and mark resistant.

5. The portable and unobtrusive educational apparatus of claim 1 wherein said plurality of

09/589,866 *Replacement Page, Amended March 1, 2002*

educational key tags are further comprised by a paper and polymer laminate.

7. A method for expanding vocabulary, comprising the steps of:
- identifying vocabulary words and definitions that define each of said vocabulary words;
 - imprinting said identified vocabulary words onto tags on a first surface thereon, one of said vocabulary words for each one of said tags;
- 5 imprinting said definitions that define said vocabulary words onto said tags on a second surface thereon opposed to said first surface wherein each tag contains at least one vocabulary word and at least one definition that defines said at least one vocabulary word;
- selecting a one of said imprinted tags;
 - inserting said selected one imprinted tag onto a key ring together with a key removably
- 10 attached therewith;
- storing said key ring, said key and said inserted, imprinted tag;
 - retrieving said stored key ring;
 - transporting said key ring, said key and inserted, imprinted tag through the natural elements without shelter;
- 15 stowing said retrieved key ring; and
- studying said selected one imprinted tag between said step of retrieving and said step of stowing.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein said step of imprinting comprises the step of printing a single tag on demand.

09/589,866 *Replacement Page, Amended March 1, 2002*

9. The method of claim 7 wherein said step of storing further comprises storing a key with said key ring.

10. The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of using said key on said retrieved key ring between said step of retrieving and said step of stowing.

11. A key set and educational aid for convenient and self-paced education, comprising:

a spirally wound resilient metal key ring having a full turn of metal and an additional wrap of metal overlapping said full turn, thereby forming a region of overlap between said full turn and said additional wrap, said full turn and said additional wrap resiliently biased into contact with each other within said region of overlap;

a key having a lock engaging body and a head engaging said key ring, a hole passing through said head through which said additional wrap may be passed by resiliently biasing said full turn and said additional wrap temporarily apart from each other and passing said additional wrap through said hole; and

a plurality of planar paper-based tags, each of standard key size having a hole passing through said tag through which said additional wrap may be passed by resiliently biasing said full turn and said additional wrap temporarily apart from each other and passing said additional wrap through said tag hole, and further having a word on a first major surface and a definition of said word on a second major surface of said planar tag opposed to said first major surface;

said key, key ring and at least one of said plurality of planar tags operatively retained to each other;

wherein said key, key ring and said at least one of said plurality of planar tags are operatively

09/589,866 *Replacement Page, Amended March 1, 2002*

transportable through the elements.

12. The portable and unobtrusive educational apparatus of claim 1 wherein said educational challenge further comprises a word, and said answer further comprises a definition.

13. The portable and unobtrusive educational apparatus of claim 5 wherein said educational challenge is imprinted upon said paper and polymer laminate.

14. The portable and unobtrusive educational apparatus of claim 13 wherein said educational challenge is imprinted on demand.

15. The portable and unobtrusive educational apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a storage box having an interior for receiving said plurality of educational key tags in stacked arrangement therein.

16. The method of claim 7 wherein said step of imprinting further comprises imprinting three hundred and sixty five of said words and three hundred and sixty five of said definitions onto three hundred and sixty five of said tags.

17. The method of claim 16 further comprising the step of:
removing said selected one of said imprinted tags and replacing said selected one with a new tag selected from said imprinted tags on a daily basis, to introduce a new word and definition daily.